

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – NOVEMBER 21, 2011

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Brian Major reconvened the Regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 7:15 P.M. in the Selectmen's Conference Room at the Town Offices. Present were: Roll Call – Chairman Major – Y and Selectmen Ted Teichert – Y, Alex Vispoli – Y, Paul Salafia – Y and Mary Lyman – Y. Also present: Town Manager Buzz Stapczynski and Town Clerk Larry Murphy. The meeting was duly posted and cable-cast live.

II. Executive Session

Chairman Major called the Executive Session to order at 6:02 P.M. in the Board of Selectman's Conference Room in the Town Offices. On a motion by Selectman Teichert with a second by Selectman Salafia, it was voted 5-0 to enter into Executive Session to discuss litigation and collective bargaining strategy and to return to Open Session. Roll Call – Chairman Major – Y, Selectman Teichert – Y, Selectman Vispoli – Y, Selectman Lyman – Y, and Selectman Salafia – Y. At 7:08 P.M., on a motion by Selectman Salafia and a second by Selectman Vispoli, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn from Executive Session and move to Regular Session and not to return. Roll Call: Chairman Major – Y, Selectman Lyman – Y, Selectman Vispoli – Y, Selectman Teichert – Y and Selectman Salafia – Y.

III. Opening Ceremonies

Chairman Major asked for a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Communications/Announcements/Liaison Reports

The Town Manager made the following announcements:

- ~ The Finance Committee Report for the Special Town Meeting will be mailed out to residents on November 23rd.
- ~ The Holiday Parade will be held on Sunday, November 27th starting at 1:00 P.M.
- ~ Clean-up from the October snowstorm is winding down. Bald Hill will remain open until Sunday, November 27th for leaf and debris drop-off – curbside leaf pickup ends the week of November 28th.
- ~ The MBTA and Mass Bay Commuter Rail are holding a hearing on Wednesday, November 30th at 6:30 PM. in the Board of Selectmen's Conference Room to discuss reconstruction of two bridges over the Shawsheen River.

Selectman Lyman would like Safety Officer Edgerly to review the crossing area at Central Street and School Street in response to safety concerns.

Selectman Vispoli said the State is offering a grant award of \$4M in seed money for projects related to regionalization and innovation and he would like the Town Manager to ask the Department Heads for ideas to bring forward.

Selectman Vispoli also requested clarification of the Warrant Article for leasing the Blanchard Street Ballfields to eliminate confusion before the December 5th Special Town Meeting. The Town Manager said there are two groups interested in leasing the ballfields (Youth Soccer and Baseball) which would provide the funding for construction of the fields. The lease would not be exclusive to the two organizations; field time would be available for other use.

Selectman Salafia encouraged everyone to support “Small Business Saturday” on December 3rd as part of their holiday shopping. The Historical Society is also conducting their annual Christmas House Tour on Saturday, December 3rd with nine houses decorated and available for viewing.

Chairman Major reported that the Chairs of the three Boards (Selectmen/Finance/School) met today with the Town Manager to review highlights of the Budget proposal to be presented at the Tri-board Meeting of December 12th. The theme of this year’s budget is “Managing Expectations”.

V. Citizens Petitions and Presentations

Bob Marshall, Samos Lane, is concerned about the discovery of arsenic in the water located in the tank adjacent to the Bancroft School property; he is also concerned about the sequence of events. Chairman Major said engineering firms have been testing the water and it has been given a clean bill of health. Mr. Marshall was encouraged to attend the presentation on December 6th regarding the water issue at the Bancroft School.

VI. Public Hearing

A. FY-2012 Tax Classification

Chief Assessor David Billard made a presentation on the classification of property and the four options the Board is required to approve: 1) Residential Tax Factor; 2) Open Space Discount (up to 25% of the value of land); 3) Residential Exemption and 4) A small Commercial Exemption. The current residential rate is \$14.12 per \$1,000. In 2011 the average tax for residences was \$7,480; commercial property was \$45,349 and industrial property was \$81,021.

Mr. Billard reviewed the class value percent changes from 2011 to 2012 and showed possible increases in the tax factor and what the outcome of the average tax bill would look like for single family homes, commercial and industrial property. It is recommended that the Board consider either the 146 Factor or the 147 factor. The 146 factor would retain the share of the levy of FY-11 and the 147 factor offers the most uniform increases for residences, commercial and industrial properties with the residential tax rate of \$14.25 and the commercial/industrial at \$23.25.

Selectman Vispoli asked for a comparison analysis for FY-10 and FY-11 with other communities. Selectman Lyman asked if the figures for this year included Stop n Shop – Mr. Billard said the figures are as of January 2011 so they do not. Chairman Major asked about the personal property valuation – Mr. Billard said the market value pre-determined by slow depreciation down to a fixed amount. Selectman Salafia asked if voting for any of the exemptions would increase residential taxes – Mr. Billard said it would.

Joe Bevilacqua, President of the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce, pointed out the troubled economic state we are in, with an uncertain future and asked the Board to consider maintaining the current level of taxes or reduce the amount for businesses to enable them to grow and invest in their companies. He asked them to please keep the taxation as low as possible.

Bob Lavoie asked the Board to be as fair as possible to all. The highest cost of business is space and personnel and the key to attracting new businesses in town is to have a tax rate favorable to business. The real key is to grow the commercial base.

Mike Mosca, 44 Pleasant Street, said residents and businesses are in financial instability and residents have paid 12% more than commercial properties. He is concerned that we risk losing the stability of the elderly population in town by increasing the residential tax.

The hearing was closed at 8:30 P.M. The Board of Selectmen will vote on the Tax Classification at their meeting on December 12th.

VII. Regular Business of the Board

A. James D. Doherty Memorial Plaque

The Board reviewed the proposal for the James D. Doherty Memorial Plaque at the Town House which will be a 15" x 20" bronze plaque with a picture of Mr. Doherty and a small biography stating his service as Town Moderator from 1978 – 2000. The plaque will hang next to the stage on the 2nd floor of the Town House. They are also examining lettering for above the stage. The project is expected to be completed by early January. The Board also discussed ideas on how to recognize residents who have put in years of service to the community and will examine this further at a future meeting.

B. Special Municipal Employees

Selectman Vispoli motioned to designate the members of the following boards/task forces as Special Municipal Employees:

- Design Review Board
- Franciscan Housing Overlay District Task Force
- Green Advisory Board
- Town Yard Task Force

The motion was seconded by Selectman Teichert and voted 5-0 to approve.

VIII. Consent Agenda

A. 2012 Annual License Renewals

Selectman Salafia motioned to approve the attached 2012 list of annual license renewals for Class I and II Dealers, Lodging, Amusement/Entertainment and Common Victuallers are being presented by the Town Clerk. The licenses will be effective from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012. The applicants have submitted all of the required paperwork, payments and have complied with all of the State and Town department conditions necessary for renewal. The motion was seconded by Selectman Lyman and voted 5-0 to approve as printed.

B. Appointments and Re-appointments

On a motion by Selectman Teichert with a second by Selectman Salafia, the Board unanimously approved the following appointments recommended by the Town Manager and as printed in the agenda.

DEPARTMENT	POSITION	RATE	EFF. DATE
<u>YOUTH SERVICES</u>			
Gabriel Liriano-Hernandez	Counselor 2 – PT	C3A/\$8.75/hr.	10/24/11
Maxfield Sabal	Counselor 2 – PT	C3A/\$8.75/hr.	10/24/11

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Elise S. Krekorian	Basketball Coach – PT	C2A/\$8.00/hr.	11/14/11
Melissa I. Damphouse	Basketball Coach – PT	C2A/\$8.00/hr.	11/14/11

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Jane Gifun	Pollworker – PT	\$8.25/hr.	7/25/11
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IX. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meetings

On a motion by Selectman Vispoli with a second by Selectman Lyman, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Minutes of the November 7, 2011 Regular Meeting with revisions.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Selectman Lyman with a second by Selectman Vispoli, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the Regular Meeting of November 21, 2011 at 8:48 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo, Recorder

Documents: Memo from Chief Assessor David Billard – Classification of Property